

REMARKS

The office action of July 2, 2007, has been carefully considered.

It is noted that claims 5-10 are objected to under 37 C.F.R. 1.75(c).

Claims 1-4 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) over the patent to Fulcher et al.

In connection with the Examiner's objection to claims 5-10, apparently the Examiner did not consider the preliminary amendment filed with the original application, in which the multiple dependency problems were corrected. Applicant has thus amended the claims as if the preliminary amendment was never entered.

In view of these considerations it is respectfully submitted that the objection to claims 5-10 under 37 C.F.R. 1.75(c) is overcome and should be withdrawn.

In view of the Examiner's rejections of the claims, applicant

has canceled claims 2, 3, 7 and 8, amended claims 1, 4-6, 9 and 10, and added new claim 11.

It is respectfully submitted that the claims presently on file differ essentially and in an unobvious, highly advantageous manner from the constructions disclosed in the reference.

Turning now to the reference, it can be seen that the patent to Fulcher et al. discloses an automated fee collection and parking fee dispensing machine for a plurality of parking places. In the embodiment of Fig. 11 the user can select a parking time at the parking meter and can pay for the parking time with a chip card, after which a printed parking ticket is dispensed, on which the time and date on which the ticket is given out are printed (see col. 15, lines 45-47 and col. 18, lines 5-56). A display is also present on the parking meter but the time is only available to the user on the ticket. Furthermore, the reference does not deal with a selected parking time, but instead with the time that the ticket is given out. In the presently claimed invention, because the user is shown the selected parking time via a display, the risk of entering an incorrect parking time is reduced. Via the indication of the display, the user has the opportunity to correct his/her selection. Thus, contrary to the device of Fulcher et al.,

the presently claimed invention reduces the risk of incorrect entry and potential overpayment.

Additionally, due to the display of the selected parking time, a parking attendant can easily determine if an individual user has exceeded the selected parking time. In Fulcher et al. the attendant must view the printed tickets or use a print out (see col. 19, lines 30-40).

Furthermore, the presently claimed invention has a time generator for overseeing the parking time and a fee table, from which the difference between the selected parking time and the actual parking time can be determined and on the basis of the fee table the exact amount to be refunded can be calculated. In Fulcher et al. there is no exact determination of fees, only a lump sum, partial refund (see col. 18, lines 49-53).

In Fulcher et al. a barcode is printed on the ticket which barcode contains information relating to the parking spot, the vehicle in the parking spot, as well as the time and date on which the vehicle was parked. The barcode is thus required for determining if a refund is needed (when the actual parking time is less than the selected parking time) or if additional charges must

be paid (when the actual parking time is greater than the selected parking time). For this the user must at the very end, before taking his/her vehicle, insert the parking ticket into the parking meter, which reads the corresponding information from the barcode. This is a complex and costly construction since it requires a laser for reading the barcode, as well as a printer for printing the barcode on the tickets.

In contrast, in the presently claimed invention this is carried out in a less complex fashion that is more comfortable for the user. This is because the central control device assigns a code to the chip card of the user, by which code the chip card can be identified in the future. Additionally, the central control device assigns a credit account to each chip card, in which credit account the relevant information (i.e. parking time, account balance, etc.) is stored. Because of the code it is possible for the central control device to assign a separate individual credit account to each chip card. This means that the user at the end of the actual parking time only needs to insert his personal chip card (i.e. a credit card) into the parking meter and this makes the appropriate charges/credits to the account. Thus, there is no need for a printer and a barcode reader, and it is not necessary for the user to carry a parking ticket because the personal chip

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card is sufficient for identification.

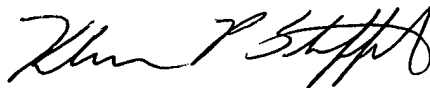
In view of these considerations it is respectfully submitted that the rejection of claims 1-4 under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) over the above-discussed reference is overcome and should be withdrawn.

Reconsideration and allowance of the present application are respectfully requested.

Any additional fees or charges required at this time in connection with this application may be charged to Patent and Trademark Office Deposit Account No. 11-1835.

Respectfully submitted,

By



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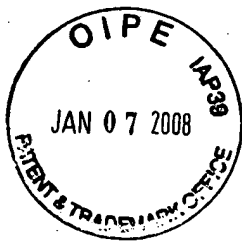
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Dated: January 2, 2008



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I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service as first class mail in an envelope addressed to: Commissioner for Patents, PO Box 1450 Alexandria, VA 22313-1450, on January 2, 2008.

By:

  
Klaus P. Stoffel

Date: January 2, 2008